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ABSTRACT

This report describes the implementation of a data-based program to reduce unacceptable student behaviors and decrease the number of administrative interventions with 21 students with severe emotional disturbances. A computerized database was developed to track classroom and transportation discipline infractions. Students met monthly to review their individualized, cumulative, computer printout of their discipline record, classroom target behaviors, and general conduct. In addition, students were videotaped monthly during individual and classroom counseling sessions. Parents met tri-monthly for an individualized conference to view their child's video tape and discipline report. A series of parenting workshops was offered to increase basic knowledge of parenting skills. Staff were provided with inservice training in techniques for effective aggression management. Referrals for behavior infractions to the administration were reduced by 75 percent during the practicum period. Parents and educators were enthusiastic about the training workshops. Extensive appendices include a behavior management plan, database entry forms, videotaping record form, parent permission form, staff questionnaires, and parent questionnaires. (Contains 36 references.) (DB)

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Pre-Crisis Intervention Strategies for Reducing Unacceptable Behaviors by Exceptional Students in a Public Elementary School

by

Linda S. Levine-Brown

Cluster XXXXV

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A Practicum II Report presented to the
Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Education

NOVA UNIVERSITY

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PRACTICUM APPROVAL SHEET

This practicum took place as described.

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Approved:

May 8, 1993
Date of Final Approval of Report

Mary W. Staggs, Ed.D.
Mary Staggs, Ed.D., Advisor

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Most of all I would like to thank the marvelous children who shared this wonderful experience with me.

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ABSTRACT

Pre-Crisis Intervention Strategies for Reducing Unacceptable Behaviors by Exceptional Students in a Public Elementary School. Levine-Brown, Linda, 1993: Practicum II Report, Nova University, Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies. Descriptors: Crisis Intervention/Early Intervention/Special Education/Emotional Disturbance/Behavior Disorders/Parenting Education/Elementary Education/Public School/Technology/ Models/Aggression Control/Discipline

The goal of this practicum was to provide staff, administration, parents, and special education students, the strategies necessary to reduce unacceptable student behaviors and decrease the amount of administrative intervention.

Exceptional education students were targeted to receive this intervention model. A computerized database was established to track classroom and transportation discipline infractions, students met monthly to review their individualized, cumulative, computer printout of their discipline record, classroom target behaviors, and general conduct. Students were video taped monthly during classroom and individual counseling sessions. Parents met tri-monthly for an individualized conference to view their child's video tape and discipline report. A series of parenting workshops was offered to increase basic knowledge of parenting skills. Staff was involved in Techniques for Effective Aggression Management training. There was no cost to the participants to receive any of the training or to be involved in the project.

The writer developed the database, pre and post questionnaires, all forms utilized during this project, and all workshop materials.

The outcome of this practicum is promising. The results demonstrate that pre-crisis intervention strategies are effective in reducing inappropriate behaviors when the plan is ear-marked to address parent, student, and teachers concerns.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Description of Work Setting and Community

Located in the Southeastern part of the United States, the site for this practicum was in one of the fastest growing counties in the country. The population, which had more than tripled over the last 20 years, was 335,000 and climbing. The ethnic composition of this rapidly growing county was comprised primarily of Caucasians, 91%, a small contingent of Blacks, 6%, and the remaining 3% were Hispanics, Asian, Pacific Islanders, American Indian and Alaskan native.

The district had 62 schools; 36 elementary schools, 11 middle schools, seven high schools, one vocational school, one adult school, and six alternative and exceptional student education centers. This practicum was conducted in a community elementary school within this county school district.

The practicum community population of 45,206 citizens represented 13% of the total inhabitants in the county and was divided into three major age groups; (a) those between 18 and 64 years of age, (b) senior citizens over 65 years of age, and (c) those between the ages of 1 and 17. These

three groups represented 55%, 25%, and 20% of the residents respectively.

Community employment consisted of a multiplicity of occupations such as trade, service, government, construction, real estate, manufacturing, and public utilities. The majority of employed residents worked in the personal service areas or retail trade businesses. The unemployment rate in this community was 4.5% and the average income for the families in this community was $25,000.

A new educational facility began operation for the first time in the 1991-1992 school year. The staff consisted of a principal, one assistant principal, 42 teachers, and 31 teacher aides servicing approximately 1,082 children from kindergarten through fifth grade. The student enrollment included 69% White, 23% Black, 6.5% Hispanic, and 1.5% Indian, Asian, and others. The ethnic composition of the school's student population varied dramatically from the community with 22% fewer Caucasians, 17% more Blacks, and five percent more Hispanic and other minorities. The economic status of the student's families was considerably below that of the general population. Approximately 35% of the students enrolled at the school were eligible to receive free or reduced lunch. The practicum was conducted in this new elementary school within the community.

The Exceptional Student Education (ESE) department was responsible for programming special education students.

There were six Exceptional Student Education units in this school servicing approximately 55 students. There were two severely emotionally disturbed (SED) classes, one emotionally handicapped (EH) class, two varying exceptionalities classes, and one transitional class with children diagnosed as having very severe physical or mental disabilities. In this second year of operation, the school was also the site of a district pilot project to house two severely emotionally disturbed classes in a regular elementary setting. Prior to this year a centralized special education school housed these classes. This was the only school in the district that accommodated severely emotionally disturbed students within the regular education setting.

Parental interest had not been a significant aspect in the school's operation. Parent-teacher association (PTA) membership, attendance at meetings, and responses to questionnaires had been minimal.

Writer's Work Setting and Role

The writer of this practicum has taught kindergarten, grade one, and special education for a total of seven years. Certified as a Learning Disabilities Specialist she has served as a learning consultant with a specialization in the diagnosis and programming of handicapped students for 12 years. In addition, she has held an administrative position as vice-principal of a middle school for two years. The

writer also founded and directed a state approved Learning Disabilities and Diagnostic Center for 10 years. The Center conducted Child Study Team evaluations, teacher training programs, parenting workshops, and provided remedial services. She also worked as a self-employed independent educational consultant. Her services included educational testing, establishment of remedial programs, consultant support for public and private schools, and she also acted as a child advocate in the community. The writer was the behavior specialist in the elementary school where this practicum was conducted.

The writer had enlisted the support of the school administrators, the special educators in the school, and the president of the parent-teacher association to conduct this practicum experience.

CHAPTER II

STUDY OF THE PROBLEM

Problem Description

To comply with the "least restrictive environment" six classes of handicapped students had been placed in a 1,082 student, kindergarten through fifth grade elementary school. Two of the six classes were for students classified as severely emotionally disturbed. The placement of two severely emotionally disturbed classes in this regular public school was a county pilot project and continuation of this type of class in the regular public school setting was being jeopardized by the frequency and type of discipline infractions that required administrative intervention.

The numerous problems presented by these classes was demanding a disproportionate amount of administrative time. A significant number of exceptional students were referred to the administration on a daily basis for classroom misbehavior and disciplinary infractions while riding the school bus. Special education students initially rode on regular school bus transportation, but there were two special education busses with assistants assigned to them. Hard data on the actual volume of referrals was difficult to

compile under the system used. The constant referral of discipline problems was particularly time consuming, often accounting for one-half of an administrator's school day. The situation had evolved to a point where 3% of the student population, the SED classes, required 50% of an administrator's time. General classroom discipline also often resulted in referrals to the administration.

In order to provide a realistic perspective of the nature and severity of some of the discipline problems being encountered, a description of a typical incident follows. A child would act out and become uncontrollable in the SED classroom; cursing, throwing items, and generally becomes a danger to himself and to others. This behavior required restraint by a teacher and a teacher's aide and the behavior specialist was called to remove the child from the classroom to prevent further disruption. It may have taken more than one person to remove the child to the behavior specialist's office, and depending on whether or not the child complied with time-out procedures and gained self-control, the involvement of a parent, guardian, parenting agency, or an administrator may have been necessary. Occasionally, the police may have been called. From initiation to resolution this type of incident involved a minimum of four and up to seven or more school personnel including administrators and may have taken from 30 minutes to 3 hours. There was at least one incident of this nature and as many as five such

incidents may have occurred on a daily basis. Physical restraint was a method commonly employed within the special education classrooms when dealing with non-compliant and aggressive students. Aggression management was not part of the training of the exceptional student education staff. Guidance and counseling was limited to post-crisis intervention.

The four primary reasons why this extensive disciplinary problem had not been resolved are listed below:

1. This was the school's first year of operation and the priority had been the establishment of smoothly functioning routines for transportation, attendance, cafeteria, dismissal, and other necessary administrative functions.

2. The volume of disciplinary infractions had continuously increased and its negative effect on the school's operations had not been fully recognized.

3. Experienced and certified special education personnel were not available to handle the special education discipline and the organizational structure did not provide for a position that would be solely responsible for this area. In addition, the general faculty was relatively inexperienced which also added to the number of discipline referrals to the administration.

4. Concern for a successful SED pilot project resulted in focusing on solving daily discipline problems as they

occurred. The inordinate volume of severe discipline problems left little time for discipline program development and implementation.

In summary, the usual complexities of opening a new elementary school were being compounded by an overwhelming volume of discipline referrals that emanated primarily from the special education classes. This constantly increasing disruption to the educational process was having a negative impact on the effectiveness and the morale of the faculty, staff, and the administration.

Problem Documentation

The writer had functioned as the behavior specialist at the practicum site from February 1992 through June 1993. The difficulties encountered in housing several special education classes in a public elementary school were observed first-hand during this period. This situation was analogous, and the problems similar, to those encountered when the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (1975) was implemented and schools were required to mainstream special classes.

Discipline

In order to establish a baseline of ESE discipline infractions, a record of behaviors requiring intervention was maintained for 10 school days. During this time-frame an average of 15 behavioral referrals were made each day for a total of 150 disciplinary infractions. The infractions

counted during this period ranged from classroom insubordination to running into the woods during physical education to a student physically jumping from a school bus on a heavily traveled major highway.

It was not unusual for 25% of the exceptional student children to be referred for disciplinary matters during any one day. The discipline problems within the special classes often resulted in physically restraining the children for non-compliant behaviors or in referral to the administration for classroom removal. Physical management techniques were not a required component of staff training. Use of physical restraint or removal from the classroom as a type of consequence was not decreasing the behavior referrals in number or reducing the severity of incidents. Cumulative official discipline records pertaining to the specific behavioral referrals for these students were not maintained.

Administration

Meetings with the administration indicated concern regarding the amount of time that was required to effectively discipline the exceptional students. The administration stated that the two severely emotionally disturbed classes would continue to be housed in the school only with the assignment of a behavior specialist to act as a buffer for discipline problems.

Staff

One-third of the general faculty had taught for three years or less. There were daily teacher requests for classroom behavioral solutions and behavior management strategies. Administrative concerns regarding discipline occurred weekly. At times students had verbally requested assistance with their behaviors.

Parents

Daily contact with parents indicated a need for suggestions and advice regarding discipline in the home. Parents were requesting behavioral suggestions and solutions to parenting difficulties on an on-going basis. When parents called for suggestions, it usually was the result of a crisis situation and intervention was needed immediately. A general information questionnaire distributed to the parents of the children in the school received a minimal response.

Transportation

Many of the students exhibited difficulties related to transportation to and from school resulting in bus discipline referrals and eventual suspension from bus transportation. Special education students were, at times, mainstreamed on the regular school buses. Some of the students were on the bus an hour or more without supervision except for the driver. A driver's aide was placed on a bus when a number of special education students were constantly

misbehaving. There had been instances where the bus driver had returned to the school, with all the children still aboard, demanding the removal of an unruly student before he would proceed. Documentation of transportation discipline infractions were often incomplete. There was no standardized format for cumulative discipline records maintained on referrals related to bus transportation.

Causative Analysis

Four apparent causes for the difficulties encountered when special education students, particularly severely emotionally disturbed children, were mainstreamed into a public education setting appeared to involve; (a) the school's discipline policy, (b) the philosophy and training of the administration and staff, (c) the extent of parent involvement, and (d) the characteristic behaviors of emotionally disturbed children.

The absence of a structured discipline policy or an effective pre-crisis intervention program to ameliorate the discipline problems exhibited by exceptional students was a significant factor. Consistent counseling, guidance intervention techniques, or preventive measures for crisis intervention involving the special education population were not available. Cumulative consequences for inappropriate behaviors were not possible because without complete documentation there was no record of prior infractions.

Another significant factor in discipline control was

the lack of teacher training in behavior analysis, behavior management, or behavior modification techniques. The use of physical restraint for non-compliant and aggressive behaviors was an accepted practice. Exceptional student education teachers, employed out-of-field, and teacher assistants not formerly trained, employed physical restraint for non-compliance to improve conduct. Administrative involvement was frequently required to send a special education student home or suspend a child from school for inappropriate behaviors. The effectiveness of administrative time on such efforts was questionable since it had not resulted in a significant change in student behavior. Inappropriate behaviors were not addressed in a consistent, preventive manner that resulted in logical consequences. Students also had no individualized behavioral plans.

One-third of the classroom teachers had less than three years teaching experience. The relative inexperience of the general faculty resulted in on-going requests for discipline strategies and suggestions to improve classroom management. This inexperience accounted for additional discipline concerns on the part of the administration.

Insufficient parent involvement in the special education program further contributed to the discipline problems.

The mainstreaming of the special education classes and

particularly the severely emotionally disturbed classes, being a pilot project, established that this was the first time the majority of the staff and administration had direct contact with classified children. Mainstreaming here primarily related to the integration of the exceptional student classes including SED classes being housed on a regular school campus. However, on a minimal scale there was mainstreaming of ESE students, including SED students, on an individualized basis, into selected regular education settings. The acting out behaviors of the emotionally disturbed child was both shocking and disconcerting to those who were not specifically trained or experienced in working with this type of child. The natural tendency when confronted with something not understood was to avoid the situation. This desire for the expected behaviors of an emotionally disturbed child to "go away" only exacerbated the problem.

Relationship of the Problem to the Literature

The lack of student discipline is exclusively the leading concern of Americans regarding the educational institution according to Hensarling (1983) and Hess (1986). This issue dominates the educational arena and recently has become more significant than other areas such as test scores, drug use, and school violence.

The issue of discipline and how it effects the exceptional student population is also of utmost importance.

The extent of the concern over discipline in the schools is evidenced by numerous newspaper articles and television news. The concern that the number of behavior disordered students is rising and that school districts are being forced to bring back students previously placed out-of-district due to tuition costs is documented by Petty (1989). The pilot program at the practicum site also had budgetary implications. Brown and Brown (1975) agree that the number of students exhibiting behavioral problems is reaching overwhelming proportions and Carroll (1987) points out that one student demonstrating a behavioral disorder can not only transmit inattention to the other students, but can halt educational progress. Tolliver (1979) agrees with Carroll (1987) stating that disturbed students often produce a ripple effect in the classroom utilizing their peers as collaborators in their misbehavior. The ripple effect not only seems to be playing a role in this practicum location, but it was spilling over from the classroom to the entire special education department and perhaps beyond. Actual on-site experience in the practicum setting appeared to corroborate the findings of Brown and Brown (1975), Carroll (1987), and Tolliver (1979). Observations included children exhibiting behavior disorders that were disruptive to classroom functioning and they often displayed destructive behavior resulting in property damage or classroom disruption, as recognized by Swartz (1983), and Swartz and

Benjamin (1982). The relationship of low academic functioning to behavior disorders and the lack of academic interest in children exhibiting conduct difficulties was readily evident as has been pointed out by Easton (1982). Asbury (1984) feels that behavior modification methods may not be effective when teachers exhibit a lack of understanding of themselves and of their students which supports the need for staff training in behavior management. Violence is a learned pattern of behavior, according to Carlson (1991), that may be reinforced in the school or family setting. Braun (1992) agrees with Carlson and feels that when an adult overreacts to a student in crisis, the conflict is then exacerbated. Both of these studies relate directly to the practicum situation, which involved the use of restraint methods that seemed to increase both the number and the intensity level of teacher-student confrontations.

The pitfall of not having staff specifically trained in pre-crisis intervention and demonstrating physical control over acting out students and the abuse that may result is pointed out by Petty (1989). This was a concern at the practicum site because restraint was frequently used to manage students who were out of control. The concern, however, also included possible injury to students or staff and personal liability.

"Timeout" was consistently used to modify behavior in the practicum setting and therefore its proper use and

personnel training was of concern. Polsgrove (1982) warns that many professionals and non-professionals do not understand the concept of "timeout" for children with behavioral disorders. Counselors and teachers are continuously looking for methods to maintain classroom control and manage disruptive students according to Asbury (1984). Although many administrators feel, according to Sorsdahl and Sanche (1985) that the answer to discipline problems is to hire additional staff members, Witmer (1971) and Thompson (1969) point out that both counselors and therapeutic workers feel incapable of meeting the needs of special children because of a lack of preparation and the unrealistic demands being placed on them. This was a familiar scenario to most experienced special educators. The facial expression of incomprehension and helplessness was not uncommon at the practicum site when staff were confronted by severely acting out students. This observation lent further credence to these studies. In addition, counselors perceived themselves as ineffective in working productively with children exhibiting these behavior disorders. It has been pointed out by Parker and Stodden (1981) that in the past guidance strategies and techniques targeted at emotionally disturbed children were similar to those utilized with non-handicapped children and has been ineffective.

The research indicated that teachers and parents were

both regularly omitted when establishing discipline policy and were not consulted when discipline procedures were invoked. It was common practice to relinquish this authority to the school administration. Although somewhat dated, an extensive study conducted by Rundberg and Fredrickson (1973) concluded that teachers and parents are often overlooked in the counseling of emotionally disturbed children, thereby depreciating their influence.

Communication between school and parent was minimal. Klein, Altman, Dreizmen, Friedman, and Powers (1981) feel that parental attitudes often lead to behavioral problems as well as academic difficulty. Dysfunctional parent attitudes often resulted in negative opinions regarding their children and consideration that their children were limited in potential and achievement. Parental involvement in their child's school programming is also important according to Noble and Kampwirth (1979) to ensure proper placement and classification. The literature suggested that encouraging parent-school involvement was an important aspect of student discipline.

CHAPTER III

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

Goals and Expectations

The following goals and outcomes were projected for this practicum.

The goal of this practicum was to reduce unacceptable student behaviors and decrease the amount of administrative intervention required by disciplinary infractions with emphasis on the special education students within a public elementary school.

Expected Outcomes

The objectives of this practicum were:

(1) There would be a significant reduction in crisis incidents requiring student removal from the classroom or administrative involvement in 10 out of 20 students. The students in the severely emotionally disturbed classes would be targeted for this objective.

(2) At least 8 out of 10 classroom disciplinary actions requiring behavior specialist intervention and/or administrative involvement would be documented in a computerized database.

(3) At least 8 out of 10 transportation disciplinary actions, from students in the SED classes,

requiring teacher and/or administrative involvement would be documented in a computerized database.

(4) At least 8 out of 10 students in the severely emotionally disturbed classroom would meet with the behavior specialist on a monthly basis to review an individualized cumulative, computer printout of their discipline record, classroom target behaviors, and overall conduct.

(5) At least 10 out of 10 parents of students in the severely emotionally disturbed classes would be given the opportunity to meet tri-monthly with the writer of this practicum to review their child's behavioral status, view individual video taping, and discuss referral situations and consequences. At least five parents would participate in each tri-monthly review.

(6) At least 8 out of 10 students would be video taped monthly. Each video taping segment would be approximately 5 - 10 minutes in length and transferred to the student's individual video cassette at the conclusion of the taping.

(7) The writer would complete "Techniques for Effective Aggression Management" (TEAM) training. This course would involve a 24 hour basic program and a 40 hour instructor training component. At least 4 of 6 staff members working with exceptional students would be trained by the writer in the proper procedures

for physical restraint.

(8) A series of discipline workshops would be presented monthly to the regular classroom teachers. At least five teachers would develop and demonstrate a variety of strategies for working with children exhibiting discipline concerns.

(9) A series of six parenting workshops would be offered to the school's general parent population through the Parent Teachers Association. At least 10 parents would be in attendance and 8 out of 10 parents would obtain an increased knowledge of parenting skills as a result of their attendance.

(10) A structured individualized behavior management plan would be developed in conjunction with the classroom teacher to address the behavioral needs of each student in the severely emotionally disturbed class. This plan would be modified and revised on a monthly basis, or when necessary (see Appendix A).

Measurement of Outcomes

There were 12 evaluation instruments that were utilized in this practicum to measure stated outcomes. The purpose of these instruments were (a) to provide accurate program feedback from parents and teachers, (b) to record students' behaviors in order to develop appropriate logical consequences, and (c) to generate a cumulative record of discipline infractions and their resolution. The

evaluations were also to be used to determine the effectiveness of programs in reference to accomplishing practicum objectives and goals.

Parent questionnaires were formulated to assess the relevance of discipline workshops, the beneficial aspects of presented topics, and additional areas of concern. Parent questionnaires were also developed and utilized to assess the effectiveness of tri-monthly parent conferences.

Staff questionnaires were created to assess staff discipline workshops, on-going evaluation of presented topics, TEAM training, and effectiveness of bi-weekly meetings.

The 12 assessment instruments are detailed below:

(1) Student Classroom Discipline Database Entry Form

The computer database for this practicum was the "Notebook Program" by Word Perfect (1990). This form was developed and utilized to input daily behavioral data generated by teacher referral to the behavior specialist (see Appendix B). A computerized database was used for documentation and behavior feedback to teachers, parents, and students regarding conduct status, patterns of behavior, and necessity for change. The database reflected both classroom and transportation behavior patterns.

(2) Student Bus Discipline Database Entry Form

This form was utilized to input specific bus

behavioral referrals into the transportation database (see Appendix C).

(3) Weekly Student Referral Graph (Individual SED Students)

Monthly graphs were generated for teachers and students. It provided the basis for crisis intervention, generating appropriate target behaviors, providing consequences and assessing the individualized behavioral management plan. Students in the severely emotionally disturbed classes were targeted for this graph.

(4) Monthly Cumulative Discipline Report (Total Number of Students Referred)

A monthly graph was generated depicting the total number of students referred to the behavior specialist and the total number of students referred to administration.

(5) Video Taping Record

A video taping log was maintained to ensure accuracy and accountability of video taping sessions (see Appendix D).

Parent Permission Form

Parent permission was obtained prior to this implementation (see Appendix E).

(6) Report to Administration

A monthly report to the administration was generated to indicate students referred to the behavior

specialist, infractions, and consequences (see Appendix F).

(7) Parent Workshop Questionnaire

This questionnaire provided feedback regarding each of the six parent workshops presented. It addressed relevance of topics, information gained, and general quality of workshop (see Appendix G).

(8) Parent Consultation Questionnaire

This questionnaire provided feedback regarding the tri-monthly parent conferences. It addressed the information obtained, the video taping presentations, and the helpfulness of the behaviorally directed parent conferences (see Appendix H).

(9) Staff Questionnaire (TEAM Training) - Pre Implementation

This questionnaire assessed the staff's perception and usefulness of the TEAM Training before implementation (see Appendix I).

(10) Staff Questionnaire (TEAM Training) - Post Implementation

This questionnaire assessed the staff's perception and usefulness of the TEAM Training after implementation (see Appendix J).

(11) Staff Discipline Workshop Questionnaire

This questionnaire assessed staff discipline workshops and on-going evaluation of presented topics.

It was presented at each workshop and addressed such issues as relevance of subject matter, functional application of strategies, and future topics of interest (see Appendix K).

(12) Discipline Conference Questionnaire

A discipline conference questionnaire ascertained the effectiveness of the strategies generated at the bi-weekly meetings with the SED teachers and the behavior specialist (see Appendix L).

CHAPTER IV

SOLUTION STRATEGY

Discussion and Evaluation of Solutions

The identified problem, excessive discipline infractions demanding an inordinate amount of administrative time and involvement, fell into three categories: (a) the general discipline throughout the school, (b) the behaviors in the special education classes, particularly the two pilot SED classes, and (c) transportation behaviors. The practicum project was designed to impact all three of these discipline infraction areas by implementing strategies to assist the administration, staff, parents, and special education students in coping with the behavioral needs of the students and resulting in appropriate interventions and disciplinary actions.

General Discipline

Parents

The strategies employed to improve discipline in the general school population included a series of six parenting workshops to be conducted at the parent-teacher association meetings. Emphasis was placed on parental involvement in their child's school program and behavior management techniques.

General Staff

In addition, a series of discipline workshops were conducted for the general faculty where emphasis was placed on classroom management, behavioral controls, and specific behavioral strategies.

Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Discipline

ESE Staff

The ESE staff was provided with Techniques for Effective Aggression Management (TEAM) training. A computer database was used to record all discipline infractions from the ESE department referred to the behavior specialist. This cumulative information was also used in formulating effective management controls and feedback for administration, parents, and ESE staff.

SED Staff

The major thrust of this practicum was to reduce the discipline problems from the two pilot program SED classes. The rationale for this emphasis was that these two classes accounted for the highest number of discipline infractions and were the source of the most severe discipline problems which required the most time to resolve. The overwhelming volume of discipline referrals, primarily generated from the SED classes, was causing a continual interruption of the educational process. This gave a negative impression of administrative effectiveness and diminished the morale of the SED staff. Accordingly, the following positive

interventions were implemented to reduce unacceptable behaviors by SED students: (a) bi-weekly SED teacher meetings, (b) monthly SED student counseling sessions, (c) monthly review of the SED discipline database by the behavior specialist with administration and SED staff, (d) tri-monthly conferences with parents of the SED students, and (e) student video taping for counseling, behavior feedback, and parent conferences.

Transportation Discipline

Discipline infractions taking place on school bus transportation were addressed separately from in-school discipline for three reasons: (a) misbehavior on the school busses was an overall student problem involving regular class students, special education students, and SED students, (b) at the time these misbehaviors occurred the students were not on school grounds, nor were they under the supervision of regular school personnel, (c) the school administration was still responsible for the well-being of the student and whatever disciplinary actions were taken.

A separate transportation discipline database was initiated and maintained to cumulatively track discipline infractions and the resulting consequences for the ESE classes, including the SED classes. The infraction record was used to determine the appropriate disciplinary actions to be taken in accord with the frequency and type of misconduct. In addition, this data was used as part of the

monthly counseling sessions and the tri-monthly parent conferences.

Description of Selected Solution

The solution strategy employed by this practicum project was designed to have a threefold effect by impacting on (a) student behaviors, (b) parent education, and (c) staff training. These combined strategies constituted a model for the discipline problems being addressed by this practicum. The model was established to follow the suggestions of a convincing study by Munson, Klein, and Delafield (1989) that found a specific behavioral model is necessary when working with children requiring intervention. The classroom teachers are frequently responsible for program implementation and they often justifiably resent the additional responsibilities as brought out by Witt and Elliott (1982). The model developed for this practicum did not require additional interventions by the classroom teachers. The practicum model aimed to effect the targeted components; students, parents, and staff, and to change student behaviors with interventions that took place outside of the classroom.

General Parent Interventions

The general parent population in the school was offered a series of six parenting workshops to cover the following areas: parent-school relationships, parent conferencing skills, changing children's behavior, quality parenting,

sensitivity training, and understanding the special education law.

General Staff Interventions

Discipline workshops were presented to the general faculty to assist in on-going behavioral concerns and strategies for classroom management.

Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Interventions

SED Staff Interventions

Bi-weekly teacher meetings were conducted to brainstorm and showcase individual students within the SED classrooms. Staff strategies included the training of teachers and administrators working with exceptional students in "Techniques for Effective Aggression Management." Behavior management plans for each student in the severely emotionally disturbed classes were formulated to establish target behaviors, strategies and procedures, timelines for evaluation, and time-out concepts. There have been various approaches regarding management techniques with behavior disordered children. The study of time-out procedures has resulted in mixed reviews with Skiba and Raison (1990) suggesting that it be carefully monitored to minimize its usage and they encourage more positive behavioral management techniques. Swartz (1983) states that restitution and time-out techniques with emotionally disturbed children can prove to be very effective. Time-out procedures were already in use throughout the ESE department therefore further

development of this concept was stressed with the staff.

SED Student Interventions

Changing the negative pattern of children's behavior is not a simple task. The advantage and necessity for children to seek pre-crisis intervention prior to their losing control and their increased ability to express appropriate behaviors is discussed by Tolliver (1979) and Goshko (1973). Goshko further examines the need for children to feel that they have the power to change their behaviors and begin to regain control over their lives. It is essential that a child takes control over his or her own behavior. This fact is substantiated by Burkholder (1983). James (1990) suggests that self-recording strategies are extremely effective in the behavior modification of disturbed children.

Applied behavior analysis has proven to be very worthwhile in working with children exhibiting behavior disorders. Involving the child in the actual selection of target behaviors and relevant reinforcers is crucial to the success of the program as discussed by Salend (1983). The importance of goal selection prior to instituting an intervention is crucial as discussed by Evans, Evans and Mercer (1984). The student and parent counseling sessions in this practicum addressed target behaviors, reinforcers germane to the individual students, and student self-graphing of their behavioral patterns. Sorsdahl and Sanche

(1985) point out that a child's peer group is the most influential factor in modifying behavior. The writer took peer group influence into consideration as a strategy when developing behavior management plans.

There is a growing body of research supporting the use of technology in the treatment of behavior disorders. DeVoe and Sherman (1975) discuss the utilization of microtechnology when working with a child's needed change in behavior. They promote the identification of specific skills to be taught under structured conditions. Webster-Stratton (1984) encourages the use of video taping to assist parents in modeling appropriate behaviors and in teaching parents how to become therapeutic caregivers.

Student directed strategies included monitoring the number and degree of behavior referrals daily through the use of the computerized "Notebook" database system (1990). Classroom and transportation referrals were entered into this system. Graphing of the student's classroom referrals took place monthly with cumulative graphs available to use as a source of comparison.

Permission to video tape the children was obtained from the parents at the beginning of the school year. Video taping took place every month for an approximate 5 to 10 minute segment. Each child's video taped segment was transferred to his or her individual tape cassette and utilized in counseling and parent conferences.

The writer of this practicum met with the students in the severely emotionally disturbed classes individually to review behavior graphs, establish goals and assess general behavior progress. A second aspect of the counseling was to reduce anxiety and stress and to improve interpersonal problem solving skills. These two areas were addressed specifically in order to meet the needs as pointed out by McKenzie (1991) that stress and anxiety are causative factors in behavior difficulties and Kazdin, Bass, Siegel, and Thomas (1989) that found aggressive children are deficient in interpersonal problem solving skills. A monthly review of the computerized discipline database information was used as the basis for counseling students and to provide feedback to administrators, teachers, and parents.

Parents of SED Students

Throughout the research there is a noticeable significance placed on the role of the parent in working with children exhibiting behavior disorders. A successful strategy based on behavioral consultation with parents provides emphasis on parent education and parent counseling (Brown & Brown, 1975). Chandler (1983) discusses the advantage of employing brief therapy with the child's parents as major participants as an effective strategy in changing a child's behavior. Parent support programs which include information sharing with suggestions and provide a

strong emphasis on parental understanding of their child's behavior is strongly recommended by Loewenstein (1981). Prior to the implementation of a strategy it appears to be vital to have parents list their children's appropriate and inappropriate behaviors. Trautman and Trail (1983) feel that this is a crucial part of educating parents on behavioral contracting systems.

Strategies directed at parent involvement addressed the parents of the children in the severely emotionally disturbed classes. The parents of the exceptional students were offered an individual meeting three times during the year to review their child's discipline graphs and computerized behavior documentation, and to view the video taped classroom and counseling segments. Conduct status, patterns of behavior, and necessity for change were discussed.

Administrative Reporting

Monthly cumulative graphs were provided to document the number of referrals to the behavior specialist and the number of referrals requiring administrative involvement. The computer database and charting provided detailed individualized information on type and number of infractions and consequences imposed. The monthly report also allowed for individual analysis, comparison of increase or decrease in number of discipline referrals and a basis for developing discipline strategies.

Practicum Facilities - Permission - Materials

The practicum was based in the office of the behavior specialist. This large area was utilized for student counseling, parent conferences, teacher meetings, and video taping. The office also contained a "time out" area. There were adequate materials and supplies such as: computer paper, ribbons, copy forms, that were required for the practicum. The behavior specialist had ready access to an IBM 386SX compatible computer. A video camcorder was purchased for the video taping after approval for practicum implementation was obtained.

Parent permission forms were obtained prior to any video taping sessions. All behavior referrals were submitted to the behavior specialist for computer input. The writer made a concerted effort to obtain all transportation referrals from administration on special education students. Evaluation forms and assessment instruments were disseminated at the workshop sessions and collected prior to the conclusion of the meetings.

Report of Action Taken

General Discipline

General Parents

A series of seven one-hour parenting workshops were offered. Presentations were in a multi-media format and included lecture, discussion, audio tapes, video tapes, and hands-on activities. Topics discussed included: parent-

teacher conferencing skills, effective parenting techniques, behavior modification, alternatives to punishment, communication, cooperation, praise vs. encouragement, homework tips, coping skills, non-traditional parenting (single parenting), sensitivity experiences of the frustrations involved in learning, and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

A one-hour format was inadequate to provide ample time for a question and answer period that was required due to the extensive amount of information requested by the parents. An additional seventh and final parenting workshop was formulated and presented which was entirely a question and answer format with the writer of this practicum organizing a panel consisting of herself and two school guidance counselors. This final workshop incorporated a surprise "pot-luck" buffet semi-social event to engender parent cohesiveness.

General Staff

Discipline conferences were held with specific general staff teachers to discuss classroom management techniques, unique behavior management plans, and specific behavioral strategies.

The amount of time required by the general teaching faculty to attend computer technology inservices, English as a Second Language courses, and school improvement meetings created difficulty in scheduling a series of staff

discipline workshops.

Additional demands placed on the staff during the practicum period, and the fact that the writer had presented a series of discipline workshops the previous year and there had only been a limited turnover of staff, it was decided that the discipline workshops would be more beneficial at the beginning of the up-coming school year. However, to meet the goal of the workshops, an alternate plan was put into effect. Conferences were held with teachers on an individual basis to formulate behavior management plans tailored to the specific needs of particular children whose behaviors were of concern to them.

Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Discipline

ESE Staff

The writer participated in and completed a 24 hour Techniques for Effective Aggression Management (TEAM) training program and subsequently a 40 hour TEAM instructor certification program. This certification allowed the writer to conduct TEAM training for selected staff members and administrators at the practicum site. This was necessary since it would not have been possible to have had the entire ESE staff trained off-site without disrupting the delivery of services to the ESE children.

Instructor certification in TEAM, by the writer, was a solution to what probably amounted to an unsolvable logistics problem.

Significant administrative and staff interest in TEAM techniques necessitated the writer to develop a modified TEAM training program to instruct 11 staff members in the correct procedures necessary to carry out aggression control. The sessions consisted of 10 hours of basic hands-on training and was comprised of 3 hours of home study and viewing of video taped procedures and 7 hours of hands-on demonstration and practice.

The "Notebook" database computer program was purchased and organized to record all disciplinary infractions referred to the writer (behavior specialist). The "Personal Filing System" computer program was obtained and graphing procedures were established to assist in charting student progress and tracking cumulative data obtained over the course of the practicum. Reports were generated monthly and provided to the administration, the teachers within the ESE department, and a copy was included in the student's discipline folders.

Although only the two SED teachers were targeted to receive the monthly teacher reports, the writer felt that all of the teachers who generated referrals to the writer's office would benefit from the cumulative monthly feed-back reports. Therefore, discipline booklets and monthly reports were created for the emotionally handicapped teacher, the two varying exceptionalities teachers, as well as the SED staff. Over the course of the practicum the entire ESE

department had children referred to the writer for behavioral concerns.

ESE Students

The number of children in the emotionally handicapped class grew so significantly during the practicum year that an additional EH classroom unit was created. The difficulty for the children to adapt to the change in teachers and structure midway through the year created additional behavioral referrals.

SED Staff

Meetings with the SED staff took place as necessary to review target behaviors, change in behavior techniques, and management treatment plans.

SED Students

There were 21 children involved in the SED program during the course of the practicum. Video taping permission was not granted for one child. Four children transferred to other schools during the program and six children entered the program after the initial implementation phase. The number of children included in the SED program was significantly higher than originally anticipated. This created additional time necessary for monthly video taping, counseling sessions, behavioral management plans, teacher and parent conferences, and the editing of video tapes. Due to the transient nature of the students targeted for the SED program, it was vitally important to keep accurate records

and accounting of all actions taken regarding video taping, meetings, and student progress. The writer felt that all of the SED children would benefit from inclusion into this program, therefore no one was excluded.

Parents of SED Students

Tri-monthly parent conferences were arranged and carried out to provide feedback to parents and students regarding behavior referrals, graphing, and viewing of individual video tapes. Upon the receipt of parental permission into this program each student was video taped approximately 10-15 minutes per month. Half of the time included classroom group work and the remainder of the time was individual video taping of counseling sessions to review the prior month's graphing of behavioral infractions, current concerns, and the recognition of present target behaviors. The children referred to these counseling sessions as "chit-chat" meetings.

Transportation Discipline

A separate transportation discipline database was established and maintained to track bus referrals. It was incorporated into the monthly administrative reporting as well as the monthly feedback to students.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS, DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND DISSEMINATION

The goal of this practicum was to reduce the frequency of unacceptable student behaviors and decrease the number of administrative interventions required by disciplinary infractions of special education students within a public elementary school.

This public elementary school, the practicum site, contained six exceptional education classes including two classes for the severely emotionally disturbed. This large population of exceptional students resulted in numerous discipline problems that necessitated a disproportionate amount of administrative time. The solution strategy utilized in this practicum involved interventions by the behavior specialist between disruptive students and the administration, staff training, parent education, student behavior modification, and student guidance counseling.

Results

The particular outcomes intended to meet the goal with their obtained results follow.

Objective 1: Twenty-one students in the severely emotionally disturbed classes were targeted for significant reduction in crisis incidents resulting in removal from the

classroom. This objective was met by a reduction of 427 or approximately 50% of SED referrals.

Prior to the practicum implementation a 10 day record of behavioral referrals was recorded to establish a base rate for comparison purposes. The base rate period established a base rate of 15 referrals per day from the ESE department. Seven of the 15 referrals were SED students or a rate of 133 SED student referrals in an average school month. During the practicum period the number of referrals reached a high of 98 in October 1992 and a low of 55 referrals in the final month of the program, March 1993 (see Table 1).

The total number of 504 SED referrals during the practicum period and 931 during a comparable base rate period resulted in an overall 46% reduction in the number of SED referrals.

Three students transferred from the SED classes to other schools during the year and seven children entered the SED classes after this practicum was initiated. There were 11 students who began the program in September and remained in the program for its duration (see Table 2).

Objective 2: An original "Notebook" computerized database program was developed (see Appendix B). This program was used to establish a record of all ESE student discipline referrals inclusive of the two SED pilot classes (see Table 3).

Table 1

Discipline Referrals To Behavior Specialist/Administration from SED Classes

September 1992 - March 1993

SUBJECTS	SEPT.		OCT.		NOV.		DEC.		JAN.		FEB.		MAR.		TOTALS	
	BS	AD	BS	AD	BS	AD	BS	AD	BS	AD	BS	AD	BS	AD	BS	AD
S1	3	1	3	0	9	5	11	3	6	3	6	2	1	0	39	14
S2	2	0	3	2	1	0	4	1	6	4	1	0	1	0	18	7
S3	3	1	6	1	0	0	1	0	4	1	3	1	4	1	21	5
S4	0	0	2	0	0	0	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	2	0
S5	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
S6	3	2	8	2	6	1	7	0	7	0	29	0	12	1	72	6
S7	---	---	---	---	1	1	15	2	33	13	14	6	3	3	66	25
S8	---	---	---	---	---	---	14	3	5	3	11	6	3	3	33	15
S9	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	0	0	3	0	3	0
S10	7	1	8	4	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	15	5
S11	3	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	2	0	8	1	19	3
S12	10	0	7	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	19	1
S13	4	1	3	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	10	2
S14	6	0	8	1	0	0	4	2	3	1	9	2	6	4	36	10
S15	14	3	12	2	3	1	4	2	3	3	1	0	0	0	37	11
S16	6	0	6	1	3	1	1	1	3	2	3	1	3	0	25	6
S17	18	5	14	1	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	32	6
S18	---	---	13	1	3	0	4	1	6	3	7	1	3	1	36	7
S19	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	3	2	2	0	2	0	7	2
S20	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	1	1	0	0	1	1
S21	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	7	0	3	0	10	0
TOTALS	81	15	98	16	27	9	66	15	81	36	96	20	55	15	504	126

Note.

BS = # Referred to behavior specialist

AD = # Referred to administration

--- = Student was not in the program during this month

Table 2

DISCIPLINE REFERRALS TO BEHAVIOR SPECIALIST/ADMINISTRATION

PARTICIPANTS FOR THE DURATION OF THE FULL PRACTICUM PROGRAM (extrapolated)

September 1992 - March 1993

SUBJECTS	SEPT.		OCT.		NOV.		DEC.		JAN.		FEB.		MAR.		TOTALS	
	BS	AD	BS	AD	BS	AD	BS	AD	BS	AD	BS	AD	BS	AD	BS	AD
S1	3	1	3	0	9	5	11	3	6	3	6	2	1	0	39	14
S2	2	0	3	2	1	0	4	1	6	4	1	0	1	0	18	7
S3	3	1	6	1	0	0	1	0	4	1	3	1	4	1	21	5
S5	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
S6	3	2	8	2	6	1	7	0	7	0	29	0	12	1	72	6
S11	3	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	2	0	8	1	19	3
S12	10	0	7	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	19	1
S13	4	1	3	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	10	2
S14	6	0	8	1	0	0	4	2	3	1	9	2	6	4	36	10
S15	14	3	12	2	3	1	4	2	3	3	1	0	0	0	37	11
S16	6	0	6	1	3	1	1	1	3	2	3	1	3	0	25	6
TOTALS	56	9	61	10	23	8	33	9	34	15	54	6	38	8	299	65

Note.

BS = # Referred to Behavior Specialist

AD = # Referred to Administration

Table 3

Total Referrals to Behavior Specialist/Administration

9/92 - 3/93

	Behavior Specialist	%	Administration	%
ESE Referrals	528	51.2%	68	35.1%
SED Referrals	504	48.8%	126	64.9%
Total Referrals	1032	100%	194	100%

All of the exceptional education students referred for intervention were logged into this database. Figure 1 graphs by month the total number of referrals to the behavioral specialist (series A), the preventive counseling sessions (series B), and referrals to the administration (series C). This graph represents the total number of referrals of all exceptional education classes including the SED referrals as depicted in Table 1 and is the outcome from the "Notebook" computerized database of all ESE student referrals (see Figure 1).

A copy of the individual student behavioral record was generated monthly for inclusion in the students' file.

The administration felt this data collection process and the utilization of computer technology was beneficial enough to arrange for the writer to have a computer system located in the behavior specialist's office to provide the opportunity for direct data input, student, parent, teacher,

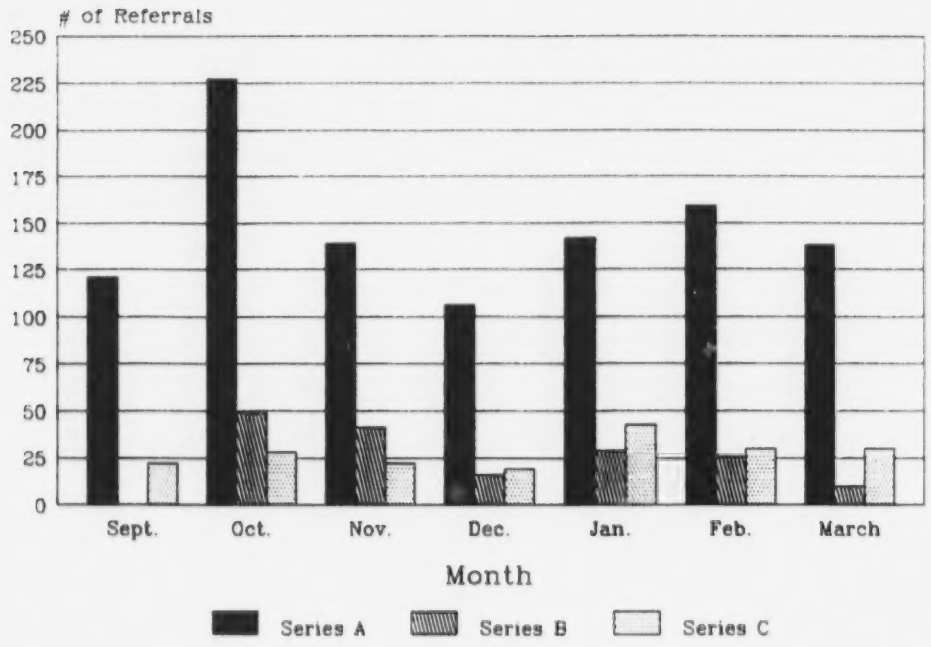

Figure 1. Referrals to BS or AD

BS=Behavior Specialist (Series A)

AD=Administration (Series C)

Preventive (Series B)

and administration access to immediate information, and the continuation of this program.

Objective 3: In order to attain the transportation objective another tailor-made database was developed to meet the needs of SED transportation discipline referrals (see Appendix C). This objective was accomplished with all of the reported transportation discipline referrals logged into the database. Twenty-four transportation infractions, from ESE classes, were reported during the period of implementation.

Objective 4: The writer met with all students in the SED classes monthly to review their individual progress using the computer notebook generated behavior graph with 100% attendance (see Figure 2). Guidance sessions with the SED students were video taped and edited so that each student had a sequential, individualized video recording of these meetings.

Objective 5: Parents of students in the severely emotionally disturbed classes were given the opportunity to meet tri-monthly with the writer of this practicum to review their child's behavioral status, view individual video taping, and discuss discipline referral situations and consequences. Twelve parents viewed their child's video taping and came to the tri-monthly meetings which exceeded the stated objective.

Objective 6: Twenty-one students enrolled in the SED

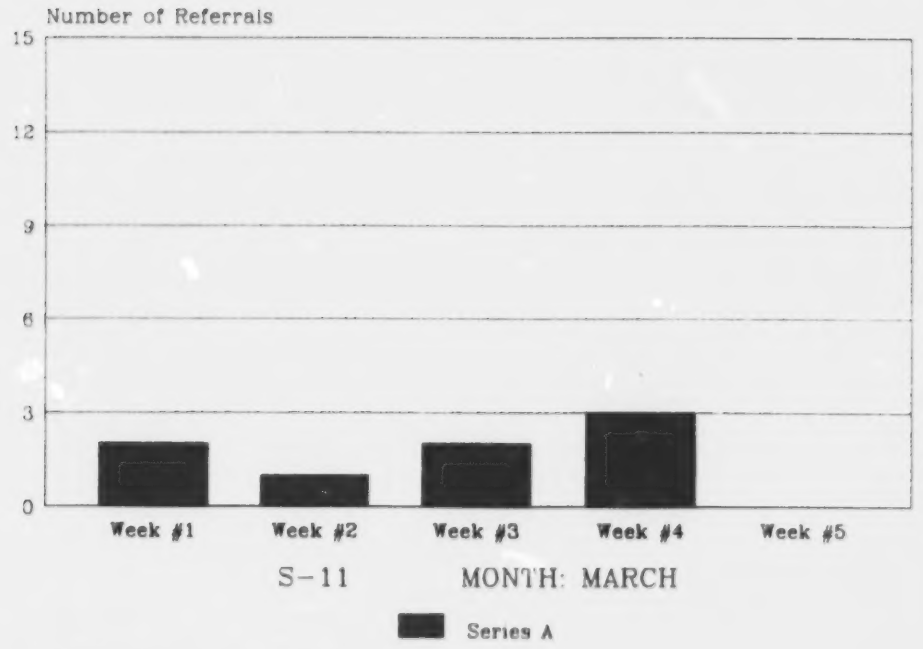

Figure 2. Student monthly behavior graph

program had their individually taped monthly segments placed on video cassette. A five minute classroom group activity and a five minute guidance session were video taped and transferred to the student's personal sequential tape. The video tapes were used to review the student's current behavioral status at parent conferences.

Objective 7: The objective of TEAM training was met with the writer completing and receiving basic and instructor certification in TEAM techniques comprised of a 24 and 40 hour program, respectively. Ten staff members and the school principal were TEAM trained by the writer at the beginning of the practicum.

Objective 8: Although structured discipline workshops were not presented to the general faculty as planned due to the heavy demands on the staff, the writer offered an open door to the general faculty and met individually with 10 teachers to discuss and plan behavioral strategies for children exhibiting discipline concerns.

Objective 9: A parent survey was developed to determine the parents' areas of interest so that workshop topics would be pertinent (see Table 4). Six parenting workshops were offered but seven were delivered to the general parent population of the school. The average workshop attendance rate was 25 to 30 parents. Twenty-five of the parents in attendance indicated on a participant response form that they had gained an increased knowledge of

Table 4

Survey of Parent Interests

Suggested Programs

Below is a list of ideas for possible PTA General meeting programs. Please check the ones you would be interested in seeing presented. PLEASE include any ideas you may have for additional programs.

Program	Number of Interested Parents Responding
Make and Take Program	20
AIDS Program	26
Ice Cream Social	19
Sports Night	16
Parenting Skills	28

The PTA is interested in introducing a Parenting Skills Program at Colonial. Below are a few of the topics which would be included in this program. Please check the programs you would be interested in seeing presented.

Attention Deficit Disorder	18
Changing Your Child's Behavior	36
Fostering Effective Communications	21
Common Behavior Problems and Techniques	24
Parent-Child Relationships	29
Single Parenting	16
Parent-to-Parent	31

In order to better serve your needs, please indicate your child's grade level/s.

____K ____1 ____2 ____3 ____4 ____5 ____ESE

Please use the space below to indicate any additional ideas you may have for either programs or fund raisers.

parenting skills as a result of the workshop (see Appendix G).

Objective 10: A structured individualized behavior management plan was developed in conjunction with the SED classroom teachers to address the behavioral needs of each student in the severely emotionally disturbed class.

Each child's specific targeted behavior was addressed on a daily basis with a daily point sheet and a choice of student selected reinforcers.

Discussion

Parenting Workshops

Seven parenting workshops were conducted throughout the school year. The workshops were coordinated through the parent-teacher association (PTA). In order to encourage parent attendance, baby-sitting services were provided through an arrangement with the local Girl Scout troop. The Scouts provided a service that was an excellent experience for them and helped them earn Scouting Achievement badges. Their baby-sitting service was a key ingredient in the success of the parenting workshops as was evidenced by the substantial increase in parent attendance once this service was implemented following the first workshop. The workshop also had the support of the PTA which provided somewhat of a built-in audience, but since the workshop invitations were provided to all parents, the PTA benefitted from increasing their membership. Some staff members attended as teachers

within the school and as parents of students in the school.

The writer of the practicum in coordination with the PTA sent out workshop notices and confirmed affirmative responses via telephone. The PTA provided refreshments at all workshops which were held on Tuesday evenings from 7:00 to 8:00 P.M. in the school media center. Parent questionnaires were completed by those in attendance at every workshop to indicate responses to the workshop and areas of individual concern. A seventh workshop was requested by the parents to provide an open question and answer format for individual problems. This was arranged as a semi-social "pot-luck" evening buffet as a concluding event for the workshop series.

General Staff Discipline Workshop Alternative

The writer of this practicum conducted a series of discipline workshops during the prior school year. This school had a low teacher turn-over and other priorities had been established for the teaching staff on the administrative calendar. Specific discipline workshops were put on hold until the 1993-1994 school year. However, individual conferences were arranged with teachers having specific concerns during the course of the year. This time was utilized to develop specific techniques and procedures related to disciplinary matters. Four staff discipline workshops were conducted by the writer during the practicum period in other elementary schools within the district.

ESE Staff TEAM Training Workshop

The primary purpose of TEAM training was to prevent injury to disturbed children who required restraint. A secondary benefit was the trained staff became more confident about their ability to handle explosive situations. The students became aware that specific types of behaviors would consistently result in specific consequences by the staff. Eleven staff members were trained in proper TEAM procedures and indicated through post TEAM training questionnaires that they felt confident in their training and were able to use the techniques which they learned successfully. There were no student or staff injuries during the implementation of TEAM techniques over the course of the practicum's implementation and the trained teachers and assistants formed a cohesive esprit de corps within the ESE department.

Discipline Database

During this practicum 504 discipline referrals were made to the behavior specialist from the SED classes and logged into the "Notebook" program designed for this purpose (see Appendix B). The fields included the students' last name, first name, infraction date, day, time, referral teacher, behavior code, infraction, consequence, secured time-out, administrative contact, parent contact, and notes.

The logging of the discipline referrals into the computer database provided some significant and useful

information. The structure of the database permitted: (a) determination of the severity of the behavior by employing a code, (b) the identification of any pattern to behavioral difficulties, and (c) the compilation of a monthly discipline report in graph and narrative form to the school administration. The behavior rating code allowed for appropriate adjustments to consequences administered. Time patterns divulged that certain students were exhibiting acting out behaviors at specific times of the day. This time factor could be utilized to determine a possible causative factor. For example, when a student consistently exhibited acting out behaviors on arrival at school, the home situation could be looked at and perhaps, determine that he was not having breakfast or that other problems existed. A student who consistently evidenced discipline infractions following lunch could be looked at to determine if food allergies or some other factor might be involved. Students who exhibited behaviors late in the day could be reacting to a fatigue factor and a shortened day or other intervention might be made. This information allowed for simple positive interventions or adjustments that were frequently effective in ameliorating those specific behavioral situations.

The monthly administrative reports were welcomed by the administration since they were found useful as a management tool. The frequency of discipline infractions, the time

required to intervene in these disruptions, and the breakdown of the types of discipline problems were used to justify additions, deletions, or changes in personnel, scheduling, and programs.

The computerized discipline database in effect converted the nebulous subjective concept of "alot of discipline problems" to an objective, concrete, body of data that could be controlled by implementing variables that would effect the data.

Student Referrals - SED

An actual data analysis of Table 1 is somewhat complex due to the mobility of the SED student population and two extraordinary events. As Table 1 reveals student 7 and 8 were responsible for 40 administrative interventions which represents 31% of the total administrative interventions. Both of these students entered the program late from more restrictive placements and one was removed from the setting and had to be placed in an alternate site. Although similar population movements could be anticipated in other settings for the purposes of this paper and to clarify the effect of the positive interventions, it was pertinent to extrapolate the referral data of the 11 students who were involved in the SED program from its inception to its completion. Eliminating those students who entered the program late or were removed due to inappropriate placement or other reasons, in effect, isolated those who received the full

impact of the instituted objectives.

It was interesting to compare the group in attendance for the full duration of the practicum with the group that entered late or left before the program was completed. The 10 students not present for the full program attended for 31 student-months and accounted for 205 discipline referrals and 61 administrative interventions. The 11 students that were present for the entire practicum program attended for 77 student-months and accounted for 299 discipline referrals and 65 administrative interventions. This comparison made it readily evident that the part-program group accounted for less than 30% of the student program attendance but were responsible for 40% of the behavioral referrals and approximately 50% (48.4%) of the administrative interventions.

This comparison was clarified by extrapolating the full- program students from the Discipline Referral Table 1 and displaying their discipline referral data separately in Table 2. The extrapolated data presents a more consistent picture with evidence of an irregular but apparently diminishing discipline referral frequency and a significant reduction in the monthly administrative interventions.

A comparison of Table 1 with Table 2 shows that the monthly average of discipline referrals to the behavior specialist was reduced from 72 referrals to 42 referrals and the average monthly administrative interventions were

reduced from 18 to 9. From these figures it can also be ascertained that although the average number of SED student referrals showed a marked decrease when the students who participated for the full length of the program were extrapolated the percentage of referrals did not differ significantly. When all students were taken into account the behavioral specialist successfully intervened in 75% of the discipline referrals with 25% requiring referral to the administration (see Table 1). With the 11 students who participated for the full practicum, the percentage of behavioral specialist referrals and administrative interventions were 79.3% and 21.7% respectively (see Table 2).

Of the 504 referrals to the behavior specialist, 126 required administrative intervention. This indicated that 75% of the referred discipline problems were handled by the behavior specialist, and 25% were referred to the administration. Using these figures as a basis the number of referrals requiring administrative action were reduced by 75% over the previous year.

In terms of the stated objective, specifically the reduction of discipline referrals requiring administrative intervention, it was evident that this outcome was attained. The number of administrative referrals from the SED classes were reduced by a minimum of 75%.

Using the baseline ESE department discipline data

compiled over a 10 day period prior to implementation of the practicum evidences a more significant reduction in discipline referrals. The pre-practicum base rate of discipline referrals was 150 every 10 day period or approximately 285 discipline referrals on an average school month. This exceeded the highest number of practicum referrals in a month (October) by 55 discipline referrals and exceeded the lowest practicum referral month (December) by 175 referrals (see Figure 1).

Discipline Comparison ESE-SED

There was no procedure in place to record discipline infractions during the prior school year preceding this practicum therefore there was no hard data available for comparison purposes. Since the number of students in both the SED classes and the other exceptional student education classes were approximately the same last year as the practicum year, it was logical to assume that the total number of discipline referrals from all exceptional education classes would be approximately the same for both school years.

The total discipline referrals for the practicum period for all exceptional student education classes (including the SED classes) were 1,032 with 194 (18.8%) being referred for administrative attention (see Figure 1). Some interesting information was arrived at by extrapolating the SED behavioral data in Table 1 from the total ESE

behavioral data in Figure 1.

Although the total number of referrals was relatively equal for SED students (564 or 48.8%) and other categories of ESE students (528 or 51.2%) the SED students accounted for almost twice as many administrative referrals (64.9%).

The SED classes would be expected to have more discipline problems than other ESE classes, however, the practicum data suggested that with an equal number of referrals the SED students were almost twice as likely to require administrative intervention. The severity of infraction and the length of time necessary for positive intervention with SED students as compared to a student with another category of ESE was also an important consideration. This concept can not be generalized to other similar populations based on this practicum, but the data collected indicated SED students should be given extra weight when determining the composition of ESE programs.

Transient Population - SED Students

It is not suggested that there is a causative factor at play here due to the number of variables that could be affecting the transient group. For example, some of the incoming students may have come from more restrictive placements, and may have had adjustment problems related to their new environment. Those leaving the program may have left because they required a more restrictive environment or were having extreme discipline problems that caused their

parents to remove them from the program. Although no causative factor is claimed the data suggested that there was a greater degree of stability among the students in attendance for the full program and that further attention was warranted in regard to the ripple effect of transient student population on behavior.

Parents Conferences - SED Students

The tri-monthly meetings with the parents of the SED students were very positive. These conferences used the video taping of their child and the computer generated behavior graphs of their child as a focal point. Both the video taping and the graphs provided objective visual and hands-on materials which could be freely discussed and supplied the opportunity to furnish the parent with behavioral strategies and additional parenting techniques. These conferences were a two-way street with the parent often providing insightful information regarding their child's behavior in terms of motivation, effective consequences, and rewards.

Without exception the parents were cooperative, enthusiastic, receptive, and open, and gave every indication that our goals were identical -- the improvement of the behavior and education of their child. This parent conference process and the results appeared to be in accord with the findings of Brown and Brown (1975) and Chandler (1983), as mentioned previously.

Counseling - SED Students

The SED students were attentive and serious about what became known as their "chit-chat" time with the behavior specialist. They quickly learned to interpret their behavior graphs and verbalized a desire to improve their graph and their behavior. The students appeared to enjoy leaving their classrooms to have their private time and took responsibility for their actions during this monthly review. The students also readily adjusted to the fact they were being video taped during these counseling sessions. Some of the SED students requested a copy of their discipline files and graphs at the end of the year so that they could look back upon their behavior when they became older. Several factors were at work with the counseling sessions and the video taping and discipline graph reviews that took place within the session. The sessions themselves were actually a pre-crisis intervention as discussed by Tolliver (1979) and Goshko (1973). While the review of the behavior graphs provided the student with some input into the selection of target behaviors as discussed by Salend (1983) and allowed them some control since they could effect the chart through the control of their own behavior an essential factor substantiated by Burkholder (1983) was being utilized.

Video Taping

Permission was obtained from the parents to video tape their children (see Appendix E). The parents of the SED

students were fascinated by the video taping of their child in the classroom setting and during the counseling sessions. The video tapes were ideal conversation motivators as "ice breakers" and were clear evidence of the child's growth and maturation as the months passed. The video tapes were extremely effective as biofeedback tools with the students and as objective behavioral records for stimulating productive parent conferences. All 21 students in the SED program were video taped for ten minutes monthly. The tapes were edited so each student had an individualized tape, approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes in length by the conclusion of the practicum. The majority of the parents requested personal copies of their child's video at the end of the program. They were all provided with a copy of an individualized video tape of their child.

One interesting result of the video taping revealed petit mal seizures from one SED student which ultimately led to proper medical and neurological intervention and a change to a more appropriate educational placement. Some of the video tapes were viewed, not only by parents, but by classroom teachers, school medical personnel, school administration, social workers, district administration, private counselors, and other pertinent professionals to view specific children and their educational, social, emotional, or behavioral concerns. The video taping provided a self-recording strategy that James (1990) felt to

be so extremely effective in modifying the behavior of disturbed children. Although video taping was not the type of self-recording that he was referring to, it certainly is applicable to this concept.

Conferences - SED Staff

There were on-going meetings with the SED staff to review individual children's needs. Behavior management was implemented through a daily point system. Children received points at half hour intervals throughout the day for: work completion, following directions, compliance, and target behaviors.

Transportation - ESE

The majority of ESE students were transported on self-contained special education busses. Only discipline infractions by SED students were entered into the transportation database. The total bus discipline referrals for the general student body were not tracked. Approximately 1,000 students were transported daily with the normal amount of discipline problems, but contrary to what would be anticipated ESE students accounted for only 24 discipline referrals during the period of September 1992 through March 1993. Logging the bus discipline infractions let the students know that school authority figures were aware of their behaviors and readily brought attention to repeat offenders. These factors alone, however, would not seem to account for the low number of discipline infractions

by ESE students using school transportation. Two busses were designated for ESE students and assigned aides which was effective in reducing bus misbehavior.

Summary of Practicum

In summary, a broad base of interventions that included general staff training, special education staff training, parent workshops, parent conferences, student counseling sessions, student video taping, and the collection and recording of discipline referrals in a comprehensive, computerized database were all brought to focus on the primary goal of a reduction in the number of behavior problems being referred to the administration.

The position of behavioral specialist provided intervention and successfully diverted approximately 75% of the discipline referrals away from administrative involvement. From this perspective the program was quite successful. However, because of the numerous variables involved and the lack of any precise measurement device it was difficult if not impossible to specifically determine what, if any, impact any one particular strategy had on the overall discipline within the ESE department.

Some of the discipline referral information collected indicated that the number of behavioral referrals diminished as the program progressed, although the number of referrals passed on to the administration remained relatively constant. The data was also useful as a management tool in

the decision making process, and in maintaining an anecdotal discipline record for educational planning.

On a more subjective level parents indicated enthusiasm regarding the workshops, the special education staff exhibited excellent teamwork and high morale, and the students within the SED department were exposed to a stable, consistent, disciplined environment that allowed for individual counseling and guidance. Parent response to the tri-monthly parent conferences during which the video taping was reviewed was very positive as indicated by their perfect attendance and their request for copies of the video tapes. Where parent support had been enlisted at the practicum site, the positive impact on both academic and behavior performance was readily evident.

Conclusion

Although the practicum period was concluded the intention was to maintain all of the programs for the remainder of the school year and the administration indicated a particular interest in continuing the data base behavioral management system.

From the vantage point of looking back it may have been more prudent to have instituted only one or two solutions rather than the broad number that were implemented. The number of pre-practicum discipline referrals were extreme and extreme measures seemed in order. Consequently, a very ambitious, multifaceted intervention strategy was employed.

However, with the benefit of this practicum experience a smaller scale approach would appear to be more prudent in most settings. For example, just concentrating on the SED classes with the computer discipline database, counseling, video taping and teacher and parent conferences would provide a challenge and offer the potential of significant results. A more limited approach is suggested, unless responsibility for implementation can be delegated to other personnel.

Given the parameter of only being able to implement two solutions they would be the computerized data base of behavioral referrals and the student video taping. Both of these solutions either had a measurable impact or a visible result that was readily evident and mutually satisfying.

Recommendations

1. In settings where a volume of discipline problems is of concern, the establishment of a computerized behavioral management data base can be used as a part of the solution process.
2. It is recommended that further assessments be made on the impact that transient ESE population has on the overall exceptional student behavioral picture with a view towards possibly establishing an intake orientation and transient adjustment program.
3. The use of video taping both as a student behavioral biofeedback counseling mechanism and as an objective parent

conferencing tool should be further refined.

4. Continuation of the database computerized management system with the generation of monthly administrative, teacher, and student reports. The data obtained for the 1993-1994 school year will be utilized for comparison purposes with the present practicum results to determine if there appears to be any long term gains.

5. Continuation of the student graphing process from the data base information will be retained as a counseling and biofeedback tool.

Dissemination

This practicum has been shared with building administration, interested staff, central office staff including the Director of Exceptional Student Education, and the Coordinator of the SED and EH programs.

The writer will disseminate copies of the practicum to the building administration, the Director of Exceptional Student Education, and the Coordinator of the SED and EH programs.

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APPENDIX A

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT PLAN

Appendix A

Behavior Management Plan

NAME: _____ TEACHER: _____

DATE PLAN INITIATED: _____

TARGET BEHAVIOR: _____

SUGGESTED

STRATEGIES: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

PLAN TO BE REVIEWED

ON: _____

APPENDIX B

STUDENT CLASSROOM DISCIPLINE DATABASE ENTRY FORM

(FROM ALL EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION CLASSES)

Appendix B

Student Classroom Discipline Database Entry Form

(From All Exceptional Education Classes)

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____

Infraction Date: _____ Day: _____ Time: _____

Referral Teacher: _____

Behavior Code: _____

Infraction: _____

_____

Consequence: _____

_____

Secured Time-out: _____ Time: ____ Admin. Contact: ____

Parent Contact: _____

_____

Notes: _____

_____

_____

APPENDIX C

TRANSPORTATION DISCIPLINE DATABASE ENTRY FORM

(FROM THE SEVERELY EMOTIONALLY DISTURBED CLASSES)

Appendix C

Transportation Discipline Database Entry Form

(From the Severely Emotionally Disturbed Classes)

Last Name: _____ Referred by: _____

First Name: _____ Bus #: _____

Code: _____

Administrative Contact: _____

Behavior: _____

_____

Date of Incident: _____

Consequence: _____

_____

Suspension: _____ # of Days: _____

APPENDIX D

VIDEO TAPING RECORD

Appendix D

Video Taping Record

NAME OF CHILD	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.

APPENDIX E

PARENT PERMISSION FORM

Appendix E

Parent Permission Form

August 31, 1992

Dear Parent and/or Guardian,

I am planning to conduct periodic video taping of the students in Colonial Elementary School in an effort to improve behavioral and educational planning. In order to have your child included in this project, I would like to have your permission on this form.

Your child will have a video taping segment of approximately 5 - 10 minutes each month. Their segment will be placed on his/her individualized tape cassette. Every three months, during the school year, I will invite you in to view the tape privately, review your child's behavioral progress, discuss interventions, and plan for the next quarter.

Please sign the form below and return it to your child's teacher.

I give permission for my child to be included in the classroom video taping. I understand that this is for education and behavioral planning and that this will only be shared with the parent and school personnel directly involved with your child.

Yes _____ No _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Thank You.

APPENDIX F

REPORT TO ADMINISTRATION

Appendix F

Report to Administration

Name of Child:	Date:	Infraction: Consequence:
Name of Child:	Date:	Infraction: Consequence:
Name of Child:	Date:	Infraction: Consequence:
Name of Child:	Date:	Infraction: Consequence:
Name of Child:	Date:	Infraction: Consequence:
Name of Child:	Date:	Infraction: Consequence:
Name of Child:	Date:	Infraction: Consequence:
Name of Child:	Date:	Infraction: Consequence:

APPENDIX G

PARENT WORKSHOP QUESTIONNAIRE

Appendix G

Parent Workshop Questionnaire

Please complete the questions below and turn this form in prior to leaving the workshop.

1. I found this workshop informative.
   Yes _____ No _____

2. I feel that I have increased my knowledge of parenting skills as a result of this workshop.
   Yes _____ No _____

3. The discussion was pertinent to my individual situation.
   Yes _____ No _____

4. Were there specific areas that you feel you would like to discuss at the next workshop meeting?
   Yes _____ No _____

   If yes, what specific topic would you like to discuss?

   _____

5. How can this workshop be improved?

   _____

6. Would you be interested in other workshops?
   Yes _____ No _____

   ie: parent conferencing, learning disabilities, sensitivity training, changing children's behavior, behavior modification, quality parenting, single parenting, coping skills, special education law

7. Circle the workshop format that you prefer: lecture - video - brainstorming - showcasing specific children

_____
Signature

Thank you for your interest and your attendance.

APPENDIX H

PARENT CONSULTATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Appendix H

Parent Consultation Questionnaire

1. Do you feel that the tri-monthly consultation meeting on your child's behavior has been helpful?

Yes ——— No ———

2. Do you feel that the video taping has given you a better understanding of your child's behavior?

Yes ——— No ———

3. Did the graphing of your child's discipline referrals help you understand the progress and behavioral status of your child?

Yes ——— No ———

4. Do you wish to have continued meetings with the Behavior Specialist every three months during the year?

Yes ——— No ———

5. Do you have any suggestions for this program?

Yes ——— No ———

_____ _____

Signature Date

Thank you for completing this form. Please leave it with the Behavior Specialist.

APPENDIX I

STAFF QUESTIONNAIRE (TEAM TRAINING)
PRE-IMPLEMENTATION

Appendix I

Staff Questionnaire (TEAM Training)

Pre-Implementation

TECHNIQUES FOR EFFECTIVE AGGRESSION MANAGEMENT (TEAM)

1. As a result of the TEAM training do you feel that you are now able to prevent or intervene in assertive or intense behavior in such a manner as not to cause injury or harm to the child or to yourself?

Yes _____ No _____

2. Do you feel more confident in your abilities and kill to avert confrontation?

Yes _____ No _____

3. Do you expect to attempt the skills which you have now acquired?

Yes _____ No _____

_____ _____

Signature Date

APPENDIX J

STAFF QUESTIONNAIRE (TEAM TRAINING)
POST-IMPLEMENTATION

Appendix J

Staff Questionnaire (TEAM Training)

Post-Implementation

TECHNIQUES FOR EFFECTIVE AGGRESSION MANAGEMENT (TEAM)

1. As a result of the TEAM training did you feel that you have been able to prevent or intervene in assertive or intense behavior in such a manner as not to cause injury or harm to the child or to yourself?

   Yes———— No————

2. Did you feel more confident in your abilities and skill to avert confrontation?

   Yes———— No————

3. Do you have any suggestions for future training?

   Yes———— No————

If yes, please note them here.

_____ _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____ _____

Signature Date

APPENDIX K

STAFF DISCIPLINE WORKSHOP QUESTIONNAIRE

Appendix K

Staff Discipline Workshop Questionnaire

Please complete the questions below and turn this form in prior to leaving the workshop.

1. I found this workshop informative.
   Yes ——— No———

2. I feel comfortable attempting to demonstrate some of the strategies discussed with the children in my class exhibiting discipline concerns.
   Yes——— No———

3. The discussion was pertinent to my classroom situation.
   Yes——— No ———

4. Were there areas of discipline that you feel you would like to discuss at the next workshop meeting?
   Yes——— No ———

   If yes, what specific topic would you like to discuss?

_____

5. How can this workshop be improved?

_____

6. Would you be interested in other workshops?
   Yes———No———

   ie: parenting, parent conferencing, learning disabilities, sensitivity training, cross cultural approaches, etc.

7. Would you like to request an individual consultation to discuss a specific discipline concern?

   Yes——— No ———

8. Circle the workshop format that you prefer: lecture - video - brainstorming - showcasing specific children

_____

Signature

Thank you for your interest and your attendance.

APPENDIX L

DISCIPLINE CONFERENCE QUESTIONNAIRE

Appendix L

Discipline Conference Questionnaire

(Staff: Bi-Weekly)

Child Showcased: _____

Teacher: _____

1. Do you feel it was helpful to showcase this child at today's meeting?

Yes _____ No _____

2. As a result of today's meeting do you have alternative strategies in which to work with this child?

Yes _____ No _____

_____ _____

Signature Date